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walks up to me and says, 'I'm so-and-so from CIA.' "

In England, by contrast, only a handful of top civil servants and ministers know the director of MI 5 (counterintelligence) and fewer still could identify the head of MI 6 (espionage). The government as a whole, rather than any individual agency head, can take the rap for any mistakes. The U.S. system offers no such place to hide.

In his 8 years as head of CIA, Allen Dulles coped as well as any man could with the difficulty of running an intelligence operation in an open society. He kept his operation and his budget a dark secret. And until bad luck intervened in 1960, the U-2 flights over Russia were a highly successful intelligence operation.

Dulles had intended to retire even before the Bay of Pigs gave the CIA—and the U.S.—a black eye. But it took a long time to find a successor. Last week Kennedy picked wealthy businessman John A. McCone for the job. McCone headed the Atomic Energy Commission under the last two years of Eisenhower and in that job started the tunnel-digging program that allowed Kennedy to resume nuclear testing quickly.

Cloak and dagger for John A. McCone

In Washington last spring after the Bay of Pigs fiasco in Cuba, an ambassador shook his head in wonder at the strange ways of Americans. "At almost every dinner I give," he said, "somebody I don't know

McCone has to be confirmed by the Senate, which means he cannot be out of the spotlight. But he has invaluable assets: a conservative skepticism, administrative hard-headedness, and the confidence of key senators. "I feel," he said, "that this is an awesome responsibility. But with conditions as they are a man could not and should not fail to answer such a request to serve his country."